

THE SPEECHES
OF
THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON
IN PARLIAMENT.

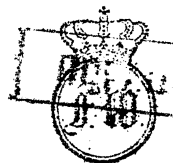
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THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON
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COLLECTED AND ARRANGED
BY THE LATE COLONEL GURWOOD, C.B., K.C.T.S.



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SPEECHES

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DUKE OF WELLINGTON

IN PARLIAMENT.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

[FIRST SESSION OF THE TWELFTH IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT.—
5 AND 6 WILLIAM IV.]

February 24, 1835.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE.

The Earl of HARDWICKE moved, and Viscount GAGE seconded, the Address.

Viscount MELBOURNE moved, as an amendment, the insertion of words calling for various reforms in Church and State.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON said:

My Lords, I am sure that, after having been alluded to so personally by the noble Viscount who has just sat down, your Lordships will not be surprised at my anxiety to take the earliest opportunity to address you, which I will do in very few words. The noble Viscount has directed the greater part of his speech to prove that the dissolution of the late Parliament was unnecessary; but the particular point on which he grounded his attack against me was my supposed responsibility for the dissolution of the late Government, by reason, as he says, of my having been the person who advised his Majesty to adopt the measures which were adopted in the formation of a new one. Begging the noble Viscount's pardon, however, I must assert that I am not responsible for the dissolution of the late Government. The late Government was dissolved from the absolute impossibility of its going on any longer. When a noble Earl (Spencer), whom I do not now see in his place, was removed from the House of Commons

by the necessity of taking his seat in this House, it was impossible for the late Government to go on. I will just desire your Lordships to recollect that it was stated by the noble Earl (Grey) who so worthily filled the situation of Prime Minister for nearly four years, when his noble colleague (Lord Althorp) in the House of Commons thought proper to resign, 'that he had lost his right hand, and that it had thus become absolutely impossible for him to continue to carry on the Government, or to serve the Crown with honor or advantage.' Not only did the noble Earl make this declaration of his inability to go on upon the retirement of his noble colleague from his Majesty's councils, but the noble Viscount opposite himself, when he afterwards came to form his Government, stated that, the noble Earl (Spencer) having consented to retain his office and position in the House of Commons, he was prepared to undertake to preside over his Majesty's councils, and to carry on the business of the country. But this was not all ; for I happen to know that, when the noble Viscount found he was likely to be deprived of the services and assistance of that noble Lord in the other House, he felt that his Administration would be placed in circumstances of the greatest difficulty and embarrassment. Besides that, it was perfectly well known to his Majesty that the influence of that noble Lord in the other House of Parliament was the foundation on which the Government to which he was attached reposed, and that, that support being removed, it must fall. When, therefore, his Majesty found it was fairly put to him whether he would consent to arrangements for the late Government proceeding as it best could, or whether he would consent to steps being taken for the formation of another Administration, it was surely natural for his Majesty to consider his own situation, and the situation in which the late Government was necessarily placed by the death of the late Earl Spencer.

The noble Earl who was at the head of the Government preceding the last had already declared that he found himself compelled to give up office because he felt that he could not retain it any longer beneficially for the public service. Now, when his Majesty had thus been left by the noble Earl, and by four other members of his Cabinet, was he, forsooth, not to be allowed to consider the position in which he was placed by the circumstances I have mentioned, but to be compelled to go on, at all events, with the Administration which those resignations had left him ?